Welcome Home!

You Served Faithfully, Honorably and with Pride!

Time to Relax

- Family functions
- See old friends
- Attend parties
- Go to clubs/bars

Increased access to alcohol
and maybe drugs

A Different War at Home

- The war against drug and alcohol abuse and the other high risks associated with them
  - Since 9-11 the Army has had a 7% increase in problem drinkers*
  - Alcohol related incidents have increased for Soldiers returning home

* Reintegration Unit Risk Inventory Survey data

Alcohol/Drug Related Problems

- **DUI**
- **Vomiting**
- **Hangover**
- **Unexpected guest for breakfast**
- **Unprotected sex and/or unwanted sex**
- **Possible STD**
- **Fighting**
- **Loss of control – doing stupid things**
- **Reduced work quality and performance**
- **Financial problems**
- **Injury**
- **Problems with friends and family**
- **Health related problems**
- **Spouse/child abuse**
- **Passing out**
- **Black outs**
- **Death**

Risk Factors

- Potential factors that may contribute to substance abuse
  - Reduced Alcohol Tolerance
  - Stress associated with reintegrating into the family
  - PTSD
  - Boredom
  - Availability of drugs and alcohol

Tolerance

- Alcohol Tolerance – The body's adaptation to alcohol use. It takes more alcohol to reach the same level of intoxication.
  - As tolerance increases you may not feel intoxicated, but you could be over the legal driving limit. Some alcohol dependent people can have a 0.2 or higher Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) and show little to no signs of being intoxicated.
  - As a persons tolerance increases, so does their chances of eventually becoming alcohol dependent

Note: Legal limit BAC for driving is .08

Tolerance - Example

When you first started drinking you may have starting feeling intoxicated after 2 or 3 beers

But after a while, it may taken up to 6 beers to feel the same way

This is the body’s way of adapting to the alcohol, but it can fool you into getting a DUI or other alcohol related incident

Tolerance

- Individuals with low tolerances or people who have not drank in a long time (i.e. deployed) may show effects of being intoxicated at BAC levels as low as 0.05.
- If you begin drinking on a regular basis, your tolerance level will quickly return and eventually surpass what it was before you deployed.

Tolerance - Example

Before you deployed, it may have taken a six pack before you felt the effects of the alcohol

But now, it may only take 3 beers to feel the same way

This happens because your body has not had alcohol in a long time and the tolerance level is reduced

Reintegration

- The stress associated with potential conflict between spouses and children after a long separation.
  - New routines at home
  - Children resentful, afraid, or not bonding
  - Doing to much or not enough
  - Unfaithfulness
- Using drugs or alcohol to reduce this stress will only increase your problems at home.

PTSD

- Many Soldiers will experience some stress associated with their experiences while deployed
  - Loss of Fellow Soldier
  - Guilty feelings
  - Unpleasant memories
- These thoughts and feeling will subside over time in most of you

PTSD

- Some Soldiers will become overwhelmed by flashbacks, memories, nightmares, frightening thoughts, sleep disturbances, depression, anxiety, and irritability.
- If these symptoms persist, seek medical treatment.
- Do not try to use alcohol and/or drugs to overcome or reduce these symptoms; it will only make things worse.

PTSD

- The National Center for PTSD states that people with PTSD also tend to have substance abuse issues
  - 51.9 % of men with PTSD abuse alcohol or are alcohol dependent
  - 27.9% of women with PTSD abuse alcohol or are alcohol dependent
  - 34.5% of men with PTSD abuse drugs or are drug dependent

Boredom

- Since we were notified of our deployment
  - You have been on an adrenaline high
  - Working 7 days a week at least 12 hours a day
- Now
  - Less excitement
  - Leave and then returning to normal duty days
- You may become a thrill seeker – Drive fast, party too much, try drugs, etc

Availability

- We know that some Soldiers used drugs and/or drank alcohol while deployed – of course no one in this unit
- Now you can buy alcohol almost anywhere (if you are 21) and drugs are pretty much available anywhere

WARRIOR

Personal Courage: Possess the Personal Courage not to use drugs or abuse alcohol and to notify the Chain of Command of Soldiers that do.

Respect: Show your Respect to the Army, your unit, fellow Soldiers, and yourself by staying drug free and drinking responsibly.

Integrity: Stay true to the Army Values and Warrior Ethos by supporting the Army's drug and alcohol policies.

Duty: Do your duty as a Soldier and stay mentally and physically tough by not using drugs or abusing alcohol.

Excellence: Exhibit honorable behavior on and off duty - don't be a substance abuser!

Summary

- You have served Faithfully, Honorably and with Pride!
- Maintain that Warrior Pride!
- Don’t use drugs!
- If you drink, then drink
  - Responsibly
  - In moderation
  - Safely (DUI)
- Don’t use Reintegration, PTSD, or boredom as an excuse!